

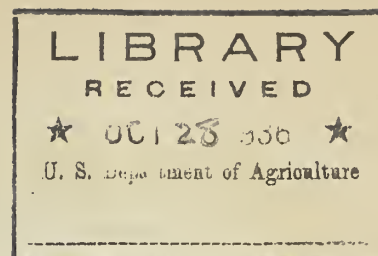
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HOUSEHOLD CALENDAR

Georgia Peaches



An interview between Miss Ruth Van Deman, Bureau of Home Economics, and Mr. W. R. Beattie, Bureau of Plant Industry, delivered in the Department of Agriculture period of the National Farm and Home Hour, broadcast by a network of 48 associate NBC radio stations, Thursday, July 9, 1936.

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MR. SALISBURY: Today your friends, Miss Van Deman and Mr. Beattie, are joining forces once more. This time they tell me they're going to give us the latest on peaches ...

MR. KIMBALL: Does that mean peach shortcake, and old-fashioned peach cobbler, and peach pie, and ...

MR. SALISBURY: Hold on there, Ted. Give Miss Van Deman a chance to tell her own story.

MISS VAN DEMAN: Oh, I don't mind. It doesn't hurt to double on peach desserts, and I'll tell you about a grand one later, Ted.

MR. KIMBALL: Tell me, Miss Van Deman. Have a heart. Don't you know what we want is a practical demonstration?

MISS VAN DEMAN: Oh, yes, I know. But first let's have some news about the peach crop. Mr. Beattie, what are the prospects for this summer?

MR. BEATTIE: Well, not so good as some years, but better than they looked a month ago. Last winter was hard on the peach buds in the North and Middle West. Lots of them were killed outright. Then the spring frosts did more damage. And on top of that came dry weather in Georgia during April and May and early June.

MISS VAN DEMAN: And Georgia's our biggest peach-producing State in the East, isn't it?

MR. BEATTIE: Yes, far and away. Last year Georgia shipped about 5,600,000 bushels of peaches. Illinois was second with 3,000,000 bushels, and North Carolina, jumping back east again, had 2,000,000 bushels.

Well, for a while this spring it looked as though there would be fewer and smaller peaches than usual rolling out of Georgia this summer. But rains down there in the last ten days have helped a lot. It won't be a bumper crop, but it will probably be about the same as Georgia sent to market last year. Notice I'm talking just about Georgia peaches.

MISS VAN DEMAN: Yes, we realize that. Now let me get the names of these Eastern peaches straight. The Hiley Belles are the ones we're getting now.

MR. BEATTIE: Yes, here's a typical one. I brought a basket along.

(over)

MISS VAN DEMAN: Good. My, aren't they pretty! Pink cheeks - white flesh. And they seem to have a characteristic ridge down one side and a little point at the blossom end, and ... Mind if I break one open?

MR. BEATTIE: That's what they're here for.

MISS VAN DEMAN: And they're free stone ... and quite sweet ... and juicy ...

MR. BEATTIE: Careful there of your dress. You know there's no stain like peach stain to make an ugly brown spot on a nice white dress.

MISS VAN DEMAN: Yes, I know. If a peach stain dries, it's hard to bleach out. But to go on with the varieties. Is Hiley Belle the only white peach that Georgia sends to market about this time?

MR. BEATTIE: No, there's the Belle, sometimes called Georgia Belle to distinguish it from the Hiley Belle. It's somewhat larger than the Hiley but it has the same rosy cheeks and white, juicy flesh. The Belle is one of our finest flavored freestone peaches. It comes just a little later than the Hiley, and a trifle ahead of the Elberta.

MISS VAN DEMAN: The Elberta. That's the yellow peach with the rather thick skin and the firm flesh we see all over the fruit stands later, isn't it?

MR. BEATTIE: Yes, the Elberta is the great market peach in this part of the country.

You know a peach is a mighty delicate fruit to ship to market. Somebody once said that if the apple was the king of fruits then the peach was the queen. Well, a bruise on the delicate downy cheek of a peach, and it's goodbye to that peach for market purposes.

MISS VAN DEMAN: Is it a bruise that starts the brown rot that sometimes ruins peaches even before they're ripe?

MR. BEATTIE: Not always. That's a fungus disease. You see peach growers have had the brown rot to contend with for a long time. Recently it has been found that it is easier to control the brown rot where the peaches are properly thinned on the tree so that the fruits do not touch each other. Then giving them a thorough dusting with sulphur helps to protect them from the disease. One of the latest developments in brown rot control is in the packing houses.

MISS VAN DEMAN: In what way?

MR. BEATTIE: Well, you know where you handle peaches you rub off or break the hairs or fuzz that cover the outside of the peach. Wherever these hairs become broken the brown rot disease may enter the peach. So in order to check the growth of these spores, a little duster is fitted to the grading machine and as the peaches leave the machine they are given a light dusting with sulphur. This starts them to market with a clean bill of health.

MISS VAN DEMAN: Well, can't the brown rot develop after the peaches are placed in the refrigerator car or while they're in the grocery store?

MR. BEATTIE: Oh, yes the brown rot may still get in its devastating work after you buy the peaches and even after you take them into your own house. But where sanitary measures are followed in the orchard and the peaches are kept properly dusted and are carefully handled there is little danger of loss occurring after the fruit gets to the consumer. Here's Morse waiting to ask a question.

MR. SALISBURY: Ruth, going back to the white and the yellow peaches, does the difference in color make any difference in the dietetic value?

MISS VAN DEMAN: Yes, it does. Yellow peaches rate as an excellent source of vitamin A, along with yellow corn, and yellow squash, and yellow sweetpotatoes. White fleshed peaches don't seem to place at all in the vitamin A class. But all peaches can be counted on for some vitamin C.

MR. SALISBURY: And that's the one?

MISS VAN DEMAN: Yes, I know it's hard to keep the vitamins straight. The nutritionists think that lots of us are getting less vitamin C than we need and that some of our rheumatic pains and diseased teeth are a result of our being too near the border line of vitamin C deficiency. Vitamin C is so easily destroyed by heat, even the heat of ordinary cooking, that we have to look to the fresh uncooked fruits and vegetables to get our quota.

MR. SALISBURY: Any other food value worth noting in peaches?

MISS VAN DEMAN: Well, they have some iron. But I'd hate to live in a world where I had to eat everything just because it was good for me. I'd eat peaches if they didn't have a vitamin, or a calorie, or a milligram of mineral. I'd eat them because they are so absolutely delicious.

MR. SALISBURY: All hail to a home economist without a eat-because-it's-good-for-you complex. All right, Mr. Beattie, go ahead with your story.

MR. BEATTIE: Well, I just wanted to ask Miss Van Deman if they'd developed any new methods of canning peaches up in the home economics laboratories lately.

MISS VAN DEMAN: No, nothing especially new. There are two ways of canning peaches. You can pack the halves raw into the jars, pour hot sirup over them, and then process in the boiling water bath. That way the peaches keep their shape best, and have the best flavor, but it isn't very economical of jar space. Or you can simmer the peaches in sirup for a few minutes, and then pack them into the jars in overlapping layers, and process them for a shorter time in the water bath. You get more fruit into each jar that way. Well, Mr. Beattie, in view of the meager prospects for peaches in the Northern States, you'd advise home canners to take advantage of the Georgia peaches as they come, wouldn't you?

MR. BEATTIE: Yes, I would. Home grown peaches are generally best, but this year it is a case of taking what you can get. Now here's Ted Kimball. I think he has something to ask you.

MR. KIMBALL: It's about that grand peach dessert, Miss Van Deman. Would some of these Hiley Belles do for that?

MISS VAN DEMAN: They certainly would. That's the first thing. Have your peaches nice and ripe. Then peel them, slice them, get a good generous dish full. Sprinkle on some fine sugar. Not too much. Pour on some good thick cream, and you have your perfect peach dessert.

MR. KIMBALL: Why, Miss Van Deman, that's just peaches and cream!

MISS VAN DEMAN: Of course. You can't improve on a good juicy, tender peach by dressing it up. If you wish, eat a piece of cake, I'd say light-as-a-feather sponge cake, along with your peaches and cream, but don't overpower that delicious fresh peach flavor with any other. Of course if you want to mix your peaches and cream and freeze them. That's all right too. Peach ice cream I think is the very best there is.

MR. KIMBALL: Well, Miss Van Deman, you disappoint me. Now peach cobbler!

MISS VAN DEMAN: Fine for the peaches that aren't good enough to eat raw. But when you've got a queen of fruits ...

MR. KIMBALL: Let her queen it. I get you, Miss Van Deman.